

**QUESTIONS FOR APPOINTEES TO THE GRAND VALLEY STATE
UNIVERSITY BOARD OF CONTROL**

1. What goals would you like to achieve during your time on the board? **I want to help GVSU continue be one of the great education values in Michigan and the Mid-West by keeping tuition affordable and the quality of instruction at a high level. I would like to see GVSU's enrollment continue to expand reflecting its educational value. *Of the current GVSU freshman class – 3,557 students – 43% are from SW Michigan, 42% from SE Michigan and 15% from Northern Michigan and out of state/foreign countries.* GVSU is a state-wide Michigan university with almost 24,000 enrolled students. I will work to continue its excellent reputation.**
2. In your discussions with the Governor's Office prior to your appointment, what was the general charge given to you? **There was no general charge , but the Governor's educational representatives inquired about my core beliefs in the importance of higher education in Michigan. I committed to do all I could to advance higher education in Michigan and particularly at GVSU.**
3. Over the last 15 or 20 years it seems that all state universities have been expanding programs to try to offer everything to everyone. Do you think this is a good idea? **If the question's proposition is true, support can be found for offering similar educational offerings at the State's colleges and universities so that students have similar courses available at whatever university they choose to attend based on their ability to pay for college, the location of their school and other relevant factors that influence a student/parents' choice of higher ed institution. There is also a good argument to support the expansion of specialized higher ed programs at universities with demonstrated long-term expertise instead of trying to duplicate quality special programs of instruction at all universities. GVSU's courses are focused on undergraduate education and professional masters' degrees. I would have to have specific facts to answer the question more specifically.**
4. There is a proposal to separate funding of the State's three largest universities from the other twelve universities. Should the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State be funded separately? **I am still studying this issue, but I believe students and their parents are better served when our universities cooperate in presenting a unified message to the Legislature as opposed to competing for limited state resources as separate groups. This issue is tied to the goals of the Governor and State to expand enrollment and educational success for more of our citizens so that we have a higher quality labor force for economic development. Each university has its own unique mission and they can best advance Michigan Higher Education by working together.**

5. Under what circumstances would you vote to increase tuition at GVSU?
Reluctantly as a last resort since I believe that GVSU's greatest attribute is the educational value it offers its students and their parents. It has the 12th lowest tuition of any of the fifteen Michigan universities and a recognized high level of quality instruction. State funding – Grand Valley is 15th in State support - and student tuition account for most of the GVSU revenue, so one obviously impacts the other.
6. Do you think GVSU has done a good job of controlling costs? **Yes. Low tuition and high academic instruction contribute greatly to its student enrollment expansion to 23,000+ over the past four decades.** Where would you find additional cost savings? **I don't know yet. We are entering our annual 2008 budget process and I will be reviewing the specific line-item reductions recommended by Administration. It is difficult for universities that are growing to reduce overall spending especially without State funding support for enrollment growth.**
7. What type of outcomes should GVSU measure to determine if it is being successful? (i.e. graduation rates, how long it took to graduate, job placement in the graduates' majors, etc.) Does GVSU currently do anything like this? **Yes, GVSU tracks such measurements which I agree are good indicators of its success. GVSU would not have grown to 23,000 students without a pattern of high graduation, timely graduation and positive job placements. GVSU reports 98% of its graduates are working or in graduate school, which is very positive. The best measure of GVSU's success is the increasing quality of its entering freshman classes – 3.53 GPA and 24 ACT . I am told that its freshman to sophomore retention rate has grown from 78% to 82% in the past five years and that Grand Valley's graduation rate is the highest among comparable Michigan universities. Its appeal to both the Southeastern and Southwestern regions of Michigan and the demonstrated financial commitment and support of GVSU by the private endowment community are also proof of GVSU's success.**
8. What is your position on the importance of state universities as authorizers of charter public schools? **Universities, especially those with Education departments, have a unique opportunity to demonstrate best educational practices. More important, they have great ability to positively affect young student lives and literally change the course of their futures. GVSU operates over two dozen charter schools, e.g. University Preparatory Academy of Detroit, which is directed by former State Sen. Doug Ross. It will have some of its first graduating class in 2007 accepted into GVSU's freshmen class. See the attached Grand Rapids Press article of 4/2/07 which describes parent reaction to some of these schools.**
9. What is your opinion of the new constitutional amendment banning the use of race and gender preferences in public university admissions? How will you ensure

that the amendment is implemented at GVSU? **It is Michigan Law and I respect and pledge to follow Michigan Laws, just the same as I must in my job as Saginaw County Prosecuting Attorney everyday. I have no doubt that GVSU will follow Michigan Law just as I am sure that it is attempting to expand the educational opportunities at GVSU to as diverse a population as it can.**

10. In which areas of technological research does GVSU specialize? How effective is GVSU at commercializing this research to help grow the State's economy? **I am not as familiar with GVSU research capacity as your question requests but I am told that Grand Valley is the public university partner in two Michigan "SmartZones". In Grand Rapids the West Michigan Science and Technology Initiative focuses on medical research and medical hardware for health care providers. In Muskegon GVSU operates the Grand Valley Alternative and Renewable Energy Center as well as the Lake Michigan Center for water management. I don't have an opinion at this time as to its effectiveness.**
11. Do you see post-secondary education as mainly a conduit to the work world or is there intrinsic value to pursuing a higher education? **I believe deeply that the role of GVSU is to do both and more with their students. Students go to school because they know it is necessary to maximize their occupational and professional opportunities in today's world. But hopefully they also go because it is the most important educational opportunity in their lives – to learn all they can, to listen to different opinions, to study in a less rushed environment, to make mistakes without career ending consequences and to grow as a human being in the best ways possible. My parents came from emigrant families and were committed to education as my ticket to a better and meaningful life. I owe them a great deal for their support of my educational quest, just as every GVSU student owes it to themselves and their family to get all they can from their time studying at the University.**
12. Do you think that K-12 institutions are doing a good job of preparing students for college? Why? **The freshman students entering GVSU are certainly well prepared and I'm sure the secondary schools believe they are doing the best they can to prepare students for college, but the results are inconsistent in my opinion. From my limited exposure in teaching in college and at SVSU, many students are lacking in writing skills and writing opportunities, are too used to accepting what they're told and not challenging academic propositions and too many of our college students are more focused on grades and graduation and less on learning and education. Both school teachers and parents want what's best for our college students and their omissions pale in comparison to the real fundamental problem in education today – legions of children dropping out of education, missing out on the dream of life with a successful college education and often consigning their lives to less than what was possible for them and their families.**